

Who Are We?

Optometry: The Primary Eye Care Profession

Doctors of optometry are independent primary health care providers who examine, diagnose, treat, and manage diseases and disorders of the visual system, the eye, and associated structures as well as diagnose related systemic conditions.

Optometrists provide more than two-thirds of the primary eye care services in the United States. They are more widely distributed geographically than other eye care providers and are readily accessible for the delivery of eye and vision care services.

There are approximately 34,000 doctors of optometry currently in practice in the United States. Optometrists practice in more than 7,000 communities, serving as the sole primary eye care providers in more than 4,300 communities.

The mission of the profession of optometry is to fulfill the vision and eye care needs of the public through clinical care, research, and education, all of which enhance the quality of life for our patients.

In 2002, the American Optometric Association (AOA) launched the Healthy Eyes Healthy People initiative, which supports their mission to ensure optimum health and vision for all people.

Optometrists have extensive training, having completed pre-professional undergraduate education in a college or university and four years of professional education at a college of optometry, leading to the doctor of optometry (O.D.) degree. Some optometrists complete a one-year clinically based residency on graduation. Many optometrists have additional expertise in areas such as low vision rehabilitation, sports vision needs, vision therapy, and occupational vision.

Optometrists and their staff can provide eye care to the entire family.

